

Ms Cecilia Malmström  
EU Commissioner for Trade  
European Commission  
Rue de la Loi/ Wetstraat 200  
1049 Brussels  
[cecilia-malmstrom-contact@ec.europa.eu](mailto:cecilia-malmstrom-contact@ec.europa.eu)

25<sup>th</sup> May 2017

**Commission reply to petition No 1073/2016 by Chris Butler-Stroud on behalf of 'Whale and Dolphin Conservation' (WDC) regarding the free trade negotiations between the EU and Japan and Japan's "scientific" whaling**

Dear Ms. Malmström,

WDC very much appreciates the EU's engagement through the International Whaling Commission (IWC), including the recent EU letter to the Government of Japan expressing the EU's serious concerns following the announcement by Japan of its New Scientific Whale Research Program in the western North Pacific (NEWREP-NP). However, WDC believes that the failure to include the issue of Japan's continued whaling activities and Japan's continued disregard for agreed IWC process in the current EU/Japan free trade agreement negotiations sends the wrong signal to the Japanese Government.

The Commission points out that the foreseen agreement will include *"an ambitious chapter on Trade and Sustainable Development, including commitments to high levels of environmental protection in domestic law and effective implementation of multilateral environmental agreements"*. WDC believes that such a chapter should specifically mention the importance of the continued recovery and protection of all cetaceans. Contrary to what the EC believes, we are convinced that the current trade negotiations are an excellent opportunity to raise the subject and to encourage the Japanese Government to reconsider their whaling policies. This would also be in line with the 'European Parliament resolution of 6 July 2016 on Japan's decision to resume whaling in the 2015-2016 season (2016/2600(RSP))' which specifically called *"on the Commission, the EEAS and the Member States to continuously engage with Japan on the issue of alleged scientific whaling with a view to abolishing the practice, using bilateral and multilateral channels"*.

As the EU Commission itself states in its response, the government of Japan has made it abundantly clear it will not abide by agreed IWC process and fully intends to continue to implement its unilaterally established whaling program NEWREP-A. In March, the fleet returned from the Antarctic, having killed a total of 333 Minke whales. In addition, the Japanese whaling fleet will shortly start whaling under the also unilaterally established NEWREP-NP program in the North Pacific.

According to recent media reports, the Japanese National Diet will soon be deliberating a draft law on whaling, which was introduced by a coalition of several Japanese political parties. The aim of the new law is to implement the framework to carry out so-called *'stable and continuous research whaling in order to resume commercial whaling and protect the Japanese whale meat food culture'*. The Japanese Government is also currently discussing the construction of a new factory-whaling vessel.

Given the current situation, WDC urges the EU Commission to raise the subject of whaling in the next round of trade talks with Japan.

We believe that the EU Commission has to build on its recent good work in engaging with the IWC and demonstrate that it will use all and every opportunity to deliver on its public commitments to protect whales; else we fear that the European public will begin to believe that the EU's conservation policies are to be trumped by economic imperatives.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Butler-Stroud', written in a cursive style.

Chris Butler-Stroud  
Chief Executive  
WDC - Whale and Dolphin Conservation

WHALE AND  
DOLPHIN  
CONSERVATION

WDC